



## **MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES (DOCTORS WITHOUT BORDERS) UK**

### **JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Job Title:** Press Officer

**Department:** Communications

**Hours:** 40 hours, full time

**Reports to:** Media Manager

**Location:** London

**Duration:** Permanent

**Salary grade:** 3.1

**Salary:** £37,333.61 per annum (non-London weighting £33,833.61)

### **MÉDECINS SANS FRONTIÈRES/DOCTORS WITHOUT BORDERS (MSF)**

Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders (MSF) provides life-saving emergency relief and longer-term medical care to some of the most vulnerable and excluded communities around the world. As an independent medical humanitarian organisation, we deliver care based only on need, regardless of ethnic origin, gender, religion or political affiliation.

MSF relies on donations from private individuals and organisations for the majority of its income. This private funding gives MSF the freedom to respond where needs are greatest and to speak out publicly, free from any political interference.

MSF has around 40,000 local and international staff working in over 70 countries, in some of the most challenging places in the world. Our medical humanitarian projects are supported by teams in 32 countries, including the UK, spread across Europe, North and South America, Asia, Africa and Australasia.

At MSF UK, we support MSF's operations by building relationships with our supporters, increasing awareness of our work, raising funds, providing specialist medical expertise, catalysing change on medical humanitarian issues, and recruiting Field staff. MSF UK personnel are dynamic, hard-working, enthusiastic and committed to MSF's values and aims.

### **COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT**

The department's purpose is to raise the profile of the organisation and its causes amongst British and international audiences to support MSF's operational, advocacy, recruitment and fundraising activities.

The press officer sits within MSF UK's media team, and reports to the media manager. The media team is one of four within MSF UK's Communications department – along with the digital, editorial/AV, and public engagement teams. The press officer will work very closely with all members of the comms team, particularly the other press officers and media manager. The team share duties and press management, including an out-of-hours on-call rota, and often cover for each other during holidays or when one member of the team is travelling as well as provide remote support to field teams in times of high-pressure.

The UK is a hub for communications internationally and MSF UK is expected to play a significant role in supporting communications ambitions for the whole of MSF.

## **JOB PURPOSE**

To raise awareness of the work and priorities of MSF with core target audiences via coverage in UK and international radio, print, TV and online media.

### **Position in the organisation**

- Reports to the Media Manager, and works closely with: all members of the Communications team; other departments in the UK office such as fundraising, HR, programmes and the Manson Unit; and the wider MSF movement
- Alternates supervision of communications assistant with the other press officer

### **Scope of job**

- Implements, in collaboration with the media manager and other members of the UK press team, a media plan to maximise positive coverage of MSF's work and values, and related humanitarian and medical issues.
- Maintains and develops UK press office systems and structures.

## **MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES AND TASKS**

### **Media work**

- Maintains and pro-actively develops journalist contacts with UK and international media, including identifying opportunities to build new relationships with key journalist and producer contacts based in the UK.
- Acts as one of the first points of contact for UK-based media enquiries, including through the provision of a 24- hour on-call service for media in conjunction with the head of communications and other members of the media team.
- Facilitates interviews with spokespeople from the UK or the field, and gathers operational information from the field/operational centers to fulfil media enquiries.
- Proactively pitches story ideas to appropriate broadcast, online and print media, with a view to increasing news, features and documentary coverage of MSF stories from international and UK media outlets.
- Assists in the pitching, development and project management of documentary projects and other A/V or TV collaborations.

### **International coordination, support and representation**

- Researches story ideas for public communications use across the MSF teams
- Maintains an up to date list of suitable feature stories, including identifying key protagonists and newsworthy angles.

- Sources appropriate content from within MSF through building relationships and planning visits in order to generate media opportunities and support journalists who wish to cover our work, and disseminates resulting materials within the movement for use internally or externally.

### **Press office management and administration**

- Attends regularly scheduled meetings to share information, brainstorm solutions and coordinate priorities, with the communications team and the UK office.
- Maintains a database of active documentary and feature pitches including podcasts.
- Contributes to and updates media contacts database of relevant documentary and feature producer/editor contacts for print, TV, online and radio.
- Maintains, in conjunction with the rest of the press team, press office systems and structures, including: daily media monitoring activity (of MSF's media coverage in the UK, and also of wider media interests and reporting); preparation and dissemination of weekly media planning information, both for the UK press office and for the wider MSF network; recording of updated press contacts lists and any other press office systems and structures.

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

### Knowledge, skills and experience

#### **Essential:**

- Demonstrable experience in press office work or international journalism, including substantial understanding of, and contacts in, UK media.
- Experience in pitching stories and features to print, radio, TV and online.
- Good knowledge of world affairs and a demonstrable understanding of and commitment to humanitarian issues.
- Excellent verbal and written communications skills; ability to adapt style to suit a wide range of audiences; accessible, friendly telephone manner.
- Fluent spoken and written English.
- Flexible, can-do attitude and good team player – this role involves working very closely and collaboratively with colleagues in the UK and overseas.
- Ability to cope with stress, retain good humor and make sound ethical and personal judgements in order to deal with ambiguities and conflict.
- Project management skills.

#### **Desirable:**

- Demonstrable network of contacts within the broadcast arena, including production houses, broadcast channels, online outlets, and distribution agencies.
- Experience in a role which involves pitching and delivering on features and/or the production or distribution of broadcast footage.
- Previous work experience with MSF or a similar medical or humanitarian organisation.
- Previous work experience in developing countries or unstable environments an advantage.
- Ability to speak other languages such as French and/or Arabic.

**MSF UK is an equal opportunities employer. We are committed to diversity and creating an inclusive environment for all employees. We encourage applications from all sections of our diverse community.**

## HOW TO APPLY

Apply on our website by submitting a copy of your CV together with a letter of motivation by the closing date.

For an informal discussion about the role, you can contact the Media Manager, Gemma Gillie, by email at: [gemma.gillie@london.msf.org](mailto:gemma.gillie@london.msf.org)

### Application checklist

Please check that you have included the following in your application:

- an up-to-date CV.
- Letter of Motivation, which is a supporting statement demonstrating how you meet the key requirements of the role.
- answers to any questions specified in the job description pack (below).

### RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE:

- **Closing date for applications:** 21 June 2021, 11.59pm (BST)
- **Interviews:** w/c 5 July 2021

### Application questions

Thank you for your interest in working with Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors without Borders (MSF) in London as a press officer. In order to get a better sense of your experience and aptitude for this work, we would like you to complete the questions below. Don't worry, there is rarely a 'right' or 'wrong' answer, but we are interested in your approach and your thinking. Brevity is encouraged – certainly do not exceed the word limit.

1. Explain what you think differentiates MSF from other humanitarian aid organisations and how would you go about illustrating this difference in the UK [max 250 words].
2. Choose a humanitarian context in which MSF is currently responding and create two story ideas or pitches for the following mediums; print/magazine and TV/radio
3. What do you think are the three best print outlets for foreign features? Give reasons for your answers. [max 250 words]

*If you are unable to attach an additional document with your application, please include your answers to the application questions toward the end of your letter of motivation.*